

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK
PROBATION AND PRETRIAL SERVICES

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Offender Workforce Development Program

Statistics reveal that one factor to being successful while on probation is obtaining and maintaining employment. Our office is committed to providing assistance which will result in a successful job placement and providing support to ensure that you retain employment. This packet is being provided to you to assist in your job search. It includes examples of resumes, cover letters, and tips and resources to make the job search process easier.

If you have questions or suggestions about any of the information in this packet, contact your assigned probation officer. The information in this packet as well as additional employment information will also be made available on our website, www.nywp.uscourts.gov. We look forward to working with you.

"It may not be easy at times, but in those times of struggle you will find a stronger sense of who you are, and you will also see yourself developing into the person you have always wanted to be."

Author Unknown

"We will deliver the highest quality services recognized nationally, by creating an environment of respect, support and leadership that inspires cooperation and innovation"

List of Employment Websites

Job Listing and Resume Posting Sites

<http://www.americasjobexchange.com>

<http://www.boldfacejobs.com>

<http://www.espan.com>

<http://www.careerexposure.com>

<http://www.jobweb.org>

<http://nationjob.com>

<http://www.job-hunt.org>

<http://www.netjobs.com>

<http://www.tjobs.com>

<http://www.nationjob.com/aviation>

<http://www.microsoft.com/careers>

<http://www.net-temps.com>

<http://www.academploy.com>

<http://www.acinet.org>

<http://www.rileyguide.com>

<http://www.labor.state.ny.us>

<http://www.jobinfo.org>

<http://www.wnyjobs.com>

<http://www.flipdog.com>

<http://www.truecareers.com>

<http://www.careermag.com>

<http://careerbuilder.com>

<http://www.careerpath.com>

<http://www.helpwanted.com>

<http://www.jobbankusa.com>

<http://www.monster.com>

<http://www.nationjob.com>

<http://www.hightechNY.com>

Government and Civil Service Jobs

<http://www.cs.state.ny.us>

<http://www.erie.gov>

<http://www.monroecounty.gov>

<http://www.usajobs.opm.gov>

<http://www.courts.state.ny.us>

Resume Preparation Online

<http://www.pongoresume.com>

Listing of Employer Web Sites

<http://nyjobsource.com>

<http://www.iambuffaloniagarajobs.com>

RE-ENTRY EMPLOYMENT SERVICE PROGRAM
ANSWERING THE TOUGH QUESTIONS

- * **Question:** What kind of work are you looking for?
* **Answer:** I have applied for the job as maintenance engineer
(State job for which you have applied)
- * **Question:** Why did your last job end?
* **Answer:** They no longer required my services. **OR**
I left because there was no future opportunity there.
(Answer this as favorably as possible, but be honest)
- * **Question:** Can you explain why you have been out of work for so long?
* **Answer:** I have been in school. I have been taking courses. (Be honest.
Be accepting of responsibility but be sure to speak about the
growth you have experienced.
- * **Question:** Will your former employer(s) give you a good reference?
* **Answer:** (If not, state the reason positively, but in detail)
There were personal differences between my supervisor and
me and although I enjoyed my job and liked working for that
company, he/she might not be the person to contact for a
reference.
- * **Question:** I have interviewed several people with more experience than
you; why should I hire you instead of them?
* **Answer:** I learn quickly and while I might not have as much
experience, I will have a fresher approach to the job than
someone who has formed habits or attitudes that may not be
compatible with your company.

RE-ENTRY EMPLOYMENT SERVICE PROGRAM

APPLICATIONS

When filling out an application be careful of the words you use to describe your situation. If the employer needs more information, be prepared to answer questions in the interview.

NEVER WRITE:

INSTEAD WRITE:

Fired.....	Will discuss during interview or terminated
Personality Conflict.....	Company restructuring (if true)
Personal/Family problems.....	Growth opportunity
Burn out.....	Career shift
Injured/ Hospitalization.....	Career change
Travel.....	Raise family
	Further education (if this is true before you returned to work)
	Seek employment with more career opportunity

ACCEPTABLE REASONS FOR LEAVING A JOB:

- * Military service
- * Further education (one time in a working history)
- * Raise family
- * Work force reduction – layoff
- * Seasonal work – layoff
- * Temporary employment
- * Relocated
- * Self-employment (one time in work history)
- * Seek salaried employment (when leaving self-employment)
- * Career change
- * Better growth opportunity

RE-ENTRY EMPLOYMENT SERVICE PROGRAM

ARE YOU A GOOD EMPLOYEE?

Can you say the following about yourself?

- ☺ I dress neatly and am well groomed.
- ☺ I follow the rules.
- ☺ I take responsibility for my mistakes.
- ☺ I am considerate of others.
- ☺ I work to develop speaking and listening skills.
- ☺ I take any extra on-the-job training courses that are offered to me.
- ☺ I work well with my co-workers.
- ☺ I cooperate with my boss.
- ☺ I do my best work.
- ☺ I am on time for work.
- ☺ I use my time at work well.
- ☺ I keep learning about my job.
- ☺ I get the job done.
- ☺ I work well without supervision.
- ☺ I try to improve my job.
- ☺ I never neglect my responsibilities, even if they are boring to me.

Sample of a Chronological Resume

Anne E. Bates

16 East Street

Kingston, Minnesota 06006

(333) 555-5555

JOB OBJECTIVE:

To work full time as a reporter for a newspaper

EDUCATION:

Alexandria College, Minnesota

B.S. Communication, June 1987

Journalism award, 1987

EXPERIENCE:

(1994 – Present)

The Daily News, Minnesota

Working part time as a reporter

Responsible for covering local high school and college events

Wrote a 3-part series on the growth of women's intercollegiate sports.

(1994-1995)

Alexandria College News, Minnesota

Served as feature editor

(Summer 1993)

WXL – Channel 52, Ashland, Minnesota

Completed a summer internship in broadcast journalism

Covered local news stories

SPECIAL SKILLS:

Fluent in Spanish

Skilled in word processing

REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

Sample of a Functional Resume

Anne E. Bates
16 East Street
Kingston, Minnesota 06006
(333) 555-5555

JOB OBJECTIVE:

To work full time as a reporter for a newspaper

SKILLS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

Interviewing

Conducted on-the-scene interviews as part of work for a television news team.

Interviewed coaches, players and athletic directors in writing a series on growth of women's intercollegiate sports.

Writing

Wrote pieces for television news broadcasts.

Wrote feature articles for college newspaper.

Performed freelance work for city newspaper.

Able to write in Spanish.

Skilled in using word processor.

Editing

Worked as feature editor for college newspaper.

WORK HISTORY:

The Daily News, Kingston, Minnesota
WXL – Channel 52, Ashland, Minnesota

EDUCATION:

Alexandria College, Alexandria, Minnesota
B.S. Communication, 1997
Journalism award, 1987

REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

RE-ENTRY EMPLOYMENT SERVICE PROGRAM

COVER LETTER FORMAT

Name of recipient of letter
Company Name
Company Address
City, State, Zip Code

Dear _____,
(Preferable to use person's name; if not - Dear Human Resource Manager:

Dear Sir/Madam:
To Whom It May Concern:

(Introductory Paragraph) With this letter I wish to express my strong interest in seeking employment with (name of company) as a/an (name of position). I saw the position listed in _____ **or** I heard about the position from _____. My resume is attached for your review and consideration.

(Explanation of skills and interests) Through my work experience I have developed (use skill words listed in the want ad). **Give an example of how you developed or used the skills listed in previous sentence.** I am interested in this position because...(say what you would like about this type of work or what interests you have that make you a good fit for this job).

(Closing statement) The above information provides an introduction to my abilities. I would welcome an opportunity to meet with you to discuss the ways I can contribute to your company. Thank you for your time and consideration, and I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Sincerely,

(Sign your name)
(Your typed name)

RE-ENTRY EMPLOYMENT SERVICE PROGRAM

DRESSING FOR A JOB INTERVIEW

- ☺ Clothing should be clean, well pressed, and fit well
- ☺ Shoes should be polished and, if possible, color coordinated with clothes
- ☺ Avoid bright colors and designs. Wear clothes in brown, navy, black,
- ☺ Women: avoid low-cut blouses or dresses. Wear a dress, suit or pant suit.
- ☺ Wear stockings and low to medium heeled shoes.
- ☺ Men: wear shirt and suitable slacks or a sport coat; wear light shirts and plain socks. Remove your hat.
- ☺ Check clothing, hair, nails, ears, etc.
- ☺ Be freshly bathed and use deodorant; have hair neatly trimmed and combed
- ☺ Brush teeth / have fresh breath
- ☺ No sunglasses
- ☺ Keep jewelry simple
- ☺ Get a good night's rest the night before the interview.

DURING THE INTERVIEW

- ☺ Be yourself
- ☺ Do not slouch – use good posture
- ☺ Be pleasant
- ☺ Be an awake, intelligent listener
- ☺ Do not appear too intense or too excited

RE-ENTRY EMPLOYMENT SERVICE PROGRAM

EMPLOYMENT HURDLES

Listed below are some of the common employment hurdles that may prevent you from getting or keeping a job.

Check each hurdle that applies to you:

I don't have transportation to work. _____

I don't have childcare or reliable back-up childcare. _____

I don't have a high school diploma or GED. _____

I have no work history or limited work history. _____

I don't know how to get started. _____

I have negative feelings about going to work. _____

I have limited family support. _____

I lack self-confidence. _____

I need references for work. _____

I need housing _____

I have health problems or someone in my family has health problems. _____

I have substance abuse problems. _____

Now, let's come up with a plan to overcome any item you checked!

RE-ENTRY EMPLOYMENT SERVICE PROGRAM

INTERVIEW CHECKLIST

Before the Interview:

- ✓ Check location, time, date and name of interviewer
- ✓ Find out as much as you can about the company
- ✓ Prepare some answers to common interview questions
- ✓ Practice interviewing and ask someone to critique your performance
- ✓ Determine salary expectations
- ✓ Dress appropriately and present a clean appearance
- ✓ Take extra copies of your resume
- ✓ Arrive on time

During the Interview:

- ✓ Be prepared to shake hands when you introduce yourself to the interviewer
- ✓ Remember the interviewer's name and use it during the interview
- ✓ Recognize that the interview is a conversation, not an interrogation
- ✓ Maintain good eye contact and try to smile
- ✓ Listen carefully and respond appropriately to questions
- ✓ Ask intelligent questions to show you are interested in the job
- ✓ Do not initiate money or benefits conversation until you have a job offer, but be prepared to negotiate a salary when the subject is raised
- ✓ Answer questions fully, but do not dominate the conversation
- ✓ Maintain good posture and present a positive attitude with a confident self-image
- ✓ Do not lie and do not bad-mouth past employers
- ✓ Find out the employer's requirements for the position and tell how you met them
- ✓ Convince the employer that you are the best candidate for the job by carefully presenting your technical skills, general abilities and personality traits
- ✓ Close the interview by asking for the job
- ✓ Find out when to follow up

After the Interview:

- ✓ Send a thank you note reasserting your interest and qualifications
- ✓ Follow up in a timely manner
- ✓ If you are not selected, try to find out why

RE-ENTRY EMPLOYMENT SERVICE PROGRAM

QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT BE ASKED AT A JOB INTERVIEW

Think about how you will answer these questions and practice answering them aloud:

1. What do you know about our company? (Find out what you can about the company)
2. What qualifications do you have for this job? (Match what you know about the job and company to your experience)
3. What is your greatest strength? (Relate to job description)
4. What is your greatest weakness? (Turn into positive; i.e., perfectionist with high self expectations. Admit a past problem and what you learned from it)
5. Tell about yourself. (Reveal something semi-personal but still professional)
6. What do you think you learned during your incarceration?
7. Why did you leave your previous job? (Turn into a positive)
8. Could you give an example of how you demonstrated _____ skill?
9. Give me an example of how you handled a difficult situation on a previous job.
10. In a job, what interests you most/least? (Relate to position)
11. Where do you see yourself in three years? (Demonstrate ambition and flexibility)
12. What could you have done better on your last job? (Keep it positive)
13. What have you done recently that shows your initiative and willingness to work?
14. Tell me about your top 3 accomplishments.
15. Why should we hire you?

RE-ENTRY EMPLOYMENT SERVICE PROGRAM QUESTIONS TO ASK INTERVIEWERS

- * What specific responsibilities would I have?
- * What might a typical workday in this job be like?
- * What types of career paths do people typically follow when they are promoted out of this position?
- * Who would be my supervisor?
- * With whom would I be working?
- * To what extent will I be working independently or as a team member?
- * How large is the department?
- * Is there a training program for new employees? If so, can you explain your training program?
- * How would my performance be evaluated?
- * How is superior performance noted?
- * Is there a probationary period? If so, how long?
- * How do I take time off to see my parole agent / probation officer, these are mandatory appointments?

Taken from *A Successful Interview* by Joanne Stachura

RE-ENTRY EMPLOYMENT SERVICE PROGRAM

TELEPHONE ETIQUETTE: IT'S MORE THAN BEING POLITE

A significant part of the networking/job search process involves talking on the telephone. Placing a call to a potential employer or career contact can cause anxiety. With practice, you can gain the confidence and poise you need.

Here are a few tips:

- * Have all your notes in front of you BEFORE you place the call
- * Write down a general script of what you want to say
- * If you aren't sure how to pronounce someone's name, ask
- * When in doubt, ask for the spelling of the person's name, particularly if you plan to write to him/her.
- * Speak clearly and don't chew gum
- * Take notes on all information you are given. Date your notes for future reference.
- * Always address the individual to whom you are speaking with their appropriate title (i.e. Dr., Mr. Or Ms.)

Your telephone conversation should include the following elements in the following order:

- * Introduce yourself
- * Identify the person with whom you wish to speak
- * Explain the purpose of your call
- * Ask for the information you desire

When you are returning a message:

Remember to be brief and to the point when you talk on the telephone. You are marketing yourself and asking for information, so your sentences should be clear and direct. It may be helpful to practice with your friends or relatives or your employment specialist before making your first call. Practice makes perfect!

Dunhill Staffing Systems
584 Delaware Avenue #101
Buffalo, NY
716-885-3576

Durham Staffing Inc.
255 Delaware Avenue
Buffalo, NY
716-856-4960

Spherion Staffing
475 Main Street
Buffalo, NY
716-854-3441

AppleOne Employment Services
1551 Niagara Falls Blvd. #5
Buffalo, NY
716-835-4005

Kelly Eng Resources
100 Corporate Pkwy, #318
Amherst, NY
716-835-2970

Creative Financial Staffing
424 Main Street, #707
Buffalo, NY
716-842-0939

Superior Technical Resources Inc.
250 International Drive
Buffalo, NY
716-631-8310

EGW Personnel Staffing
1700 Clinton Street, #1
Buffalo, NY
716-822-6166

Adecco
2470 Walden Avenue, #600
Buffalo, NY
716-685-5220

Office Team
726 Exchange Street, #818
Buffalo, NY
716-842-0852

RE-ENTRY EMPLOYMENT SERVICE PROGRAM

THANK YOU LETTER FORMAT

Date _____

Name of person you interviewed with _____

Name of Company / Agency _____

City, State, Zip _____

Dear _____:

It was a pleasure meeting with you to discuss the _____ position and how my skills and experience would be well suited for the position.

As I stated in the interview, I am very interested in the position because _____. I believe your organization/company would be a good fit for me because _____.

I am very interested in the position and I believe that I could meet the company's/agency's expectations. Should you require any additional information, please contact me at _____.

Again, thank you for your time and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

(Your signed name)

(Your typed name)

RE-ENTRY EMPLOYMENT SERVICE PROGRAM

YOUR ATTITUDE AND YOU

Do you take a positive attitude toward yourself and have a positive attitude on the job?

1. Are you willing to **LEARN?** – **KNOWLEDGE** is important!
2. Do you do your **BEST** on the job? – Take **PRIDE** in your work
3. Do you demonstrate **ENTHUSIASM?** – **ENTHUSIASM** fuels progress
4. Are you willing to **GROW?**
5. Do you welcome **CHANGES?**
6. Do you cultivate a **SENSE OF HUMOR?**
7. Are you **DEPENDABLE?** – **DEPENDABILITY** is the keystone to success on the job
8. Do you **RESPECT** the rights of others?
9. Are you **CONSIDERATE** of others

12 Easy Ways to develop a positive attitude:

1. Keep co-workers **INFORMED**
2. Be **PUNCTUAL**
3. Be **CHEERFUL**
4. Use only **POLITE WORDS**
5. Be **HELPFUL**
6. Be **PATIENT**
7. Believe in yourself
8. Set **GOALS** for yourself
9. Act for what you believe is **RIGHT**
10. **CARE** about other people
11. **IMPROVE** yourself
12. Get **FUN** out of life

RE-ENTRY EMPLOYMENT SERVICE PROGRAM

LETTER OF EXPLANATION

Name of recipient of letter
Company Name
Company Address
City, State, Zip Code

Dear _____,
(Preferable to use person's name; if not - Dear Human Resource Manager:

Dear Sir/Madam:
To Whom It May Concern:

My name is _____, and I am currently seeking work within your company. My intention for writing this letter is to explain my situation and offer you some reassurance that I will be an asset to your organization.

In 2004, I was convicted of _____ and served 38 months in Federal Prison. During that time of my life I was irresponsible, financially unstable and had no plan or goals for my future. I was supporting two children and as time progressed, I allowed my circumstances to negatively affect my decision and I acted out of character.

In the pursuit of changing my life and rebuilding my character, I took several classes during my incarceration. Classes like Money Management, Parenting, Resume Writing, and Business Ready, helped me gain financial literacy, parenting skills and preparedness for the workforce upon my release.

The experience taught me a lot. I matured tremendously and finally came to the understanding that no matter what the circumstances, taking the easy road has serious and life altering consequences and repercussions. Working hard, being prepared and persistence are the true ingredients to success. As an employee in your company you will find that I am a hard worker and dependable. It is also worth mentioning that by hiring me, your company is eligible to receive the Work Opportunity Tax Credit and up to fifty percent refund for any on the job training that you afford me. Moreover, I am eligible for the Federal Bonding Program which offers a limited insurance plan of five thousand dollars. If you wish to further discuss this matter, I can be contacted at: (999) 555-1234.

Thank you for your time, consideration and potential opportunity to be an asset to your company.

Respectfully yours,

(Sign your name)
(Your typed name)